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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8518
INFO RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 0471
RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ASTANA 0052

C O N F I D E N T I A L KYIV 001714

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/02/2019

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PARM](#) [UP](#)

SUBJECT: DIPLOMATIC NOTE REGARDING UKRAINIAN LINK OUTAGE

REF: SECSTATE 93861

Classified By: Political Counselor Colin Cleary, Reason 1.4 (b/d)

¶1. (U) Embassy delivered reftel diplomatic note formally to MFA on September 17. Embassy also delivered substance of the note a demarche/talking points, along with an advance copy of the note itself to MFA, s Arms Control and Military Technical Cooperation Directorate on Monday, September 14. Embassy raised the substance and discussed the ongoing outage with Evgeniy Shendyuk of the Verification Directorate of the UAF General Staff on both September 15 and 16.

Delivery Status

¶2. (C) Embassy continues to pass NRRC messages per Washington instructions directly to Verification Directorate head Shendyuk, who travels across town (a journey that can take as much as forty-five minutes or more in either direction) to receive them in hard copy from us. On at least one occasion, Shendyuk has postponed a hand-off due to the messages' relatively low priority and the inconvenience of this arrangement. This may raise concerns about technical fulfillment of Treaty obligations.

¶3. (C) Reaction at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the demarche was tepid, although the MFA had not been impacted by the outage in any way. Two days later, Shendyuk approached us to ask how Ukraine should pass its notifications to the U.S. His leading questions conveyed a hope that Embassy Kyiv would volunteer to take the information, format it and transmit it via our own channels on the Directorate's behalf. Our recommendation that the Verification Directorate deliver outgoing messages via the Ukrainian Embassy in Washington seemed to cause a logistical problem for Shendyuk, as he did not know how to format the message so that MFA could transmit it to the Embassy, and sought our advice on the problem.

Comment

¶4. (C) Previous and subsequent discussions with Shendyuk have not shed much light on what the real problem is; however, there could well be several factors at work. The Verification Directorate - which does not have an internet connection and which communicates via a single phone/fax machine - may be unable to pay the Ukrainian service provider and service has been disconnected. It is also possible that the interruption has something to do with the ongoing negotiations with the U.S. NRRC over the cost of providing service in the post-START future.

¶5. (C) It might be worth considering whether it is possible to shift both sides of the communication equation (both outgoing and incoming NRRC messages) to Washington, through the Ukrainian Embassy, in order to increase MFA awareness of the problem and potentially reduce the risk of messages not being received promptly by the GoU in Kyiv.

PETTTT